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Department of State

TELEGRAM

CN 4967

Date Oct 31, 1974

2300Z

ROUTINE
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ACTION:

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIP (KISSINGER, Henry A.)

SUBJECT: Exchange of Dinner Toasts Between Bangladesh
 Foreign Minister Kamal Hossain and Secretary
 Kissinger in Dacca October 30, 1974

ACTION: SecState WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO: AmEmbassy ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AmEmbassy NEW DELHI

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FOR DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT
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Transcript

1. ~~RECEIVED~~ of Foreign Minister Hossain's toast follows:

QUOTE It gives me great pleasure to extend on behalf
 of the Government and people of Bangladesh a warm welcome
 to you, to Mrs. Kissinger and to the members of your delegation
 on your first visit to Bangladesh. We are indeed happy that you
 have found time, despite your many preoccupations, to come
 to Bangladesh, soon after the recent meeting in Washington
 between President Ford and our Prime Minister Bangabandhu

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DRAFTING DATE

10/30/74

TEL. EXT.

APPROVED BY:

AMB:REAnderson

S/S-S:AMcKee

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Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and ~~was~~ ^{was} visiting in New York, when we

[were able to note with satisfaction the steady development of friendly relations between our two countries. Your visit to Bangladesh will contribute towards further development of the friendly relations which we both value.]

The Bengalee people have known of the goodwill and friendly feelings that the American people have for them. Indeed we recall with appreciation the sympathy and support of the people of the United States, including many of their representatives in Congress, during the difficult days of our liberation struggle. We, therefore, welcomed the establishment of relations between our governments soon after liberation, and gratefully acknowledge the valuable economic assistance extended to us since liberation by the Government of the United States.

The emergence of sovereign, independent Bangladesh was a fulfilment of the aspiration of the Bengalee people to live in freedom. Independence meant for them an opportunity to recover from centuries of neglect and exploitation. The luxuriant green of Bangladesh reflects the innate fertility of our land. Yet today our people are prey to starvation and suffer from the scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment. Our highest priority upon independence has been to harness the resources, with which nature had endowed us and which remained [unexploited, due to the investments necessary for their development]

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having been denied in the past. Our fertile land, given investments in irrigation and inputs, has the latent potential for a three to four fold increase in food production, which together with proper development of our other resources including deposits of natural gas, our forests, and our fisheries, would provide the foundations of a self-reliant economy. This task has been made enormously difficult by the impact of global inflation, which has resulted in a steep escalation of the cost of development. The situation has been further aggravated by the devastating floods that we experienced this year. The limits of endurance of a people have hardly been tested as those of the people of Bangladesh. Yet they have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, their strong determination to contend against adversity and to build a better future for themselves. There is no doubt that the material assistance we have received ~~from~~ from friendly countries, including the United States, has provided valuable support for the efforts of our people. Indeed such support and assistance will continue to be of importance to our efforts to build a better life for our people.

We have steadfastly pursued an independent, non-aligned foreign policy, seeking to develop friendly relations with all countries, on the basis of respect for sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. We have remained committed to the pursuit of peace

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[in our sub-continent, in our region and in the world. We have,]
therefore, appreciated Mr. Secretary of State, your efforts for
the promotion of detente and the easing of tensions in different
parts of the world. It is our hope that lasting peace may be
established in the Middle East in consonance with the just
aspirations of our Arab brethren, including the people of
Palestine. We, who represent the poor and under-privileged
majority of mankind, look forward to the creation of an enduring
structure of peace in the world, so that valuable resources may
be released for promotion of the welfare of the people of the
world. Involved as we are in fighting continuing battles in the
global war against hunger, we have appreciated the contribution
you have made in focussing attention on the problem of food, and
in proposing a World Conference on this subject. It is our hope
that this Conference will result in a meaningful programme of
action to meet one of the most urgent problems of our times.

Consistently with our commitment to peace, we have
striven to promote normalization of relations and the establish-
ment of durable peace in our sub-continent. We are fortunate in
having the best of relations with our immediate neighbors. We
have made our maximum contribution towards promoting normaliza-
tion of relations with Pakistan. We remain ready to move forward

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towards this goal through solution of the remaining outstanding problems on the basis of discussions, in a spirit of fair play and mutual accommodation. We note with satisfaction that the Government of the United States has appreciated our efforts to promote the process of normalization in our sub-continent.

Mr. Secretary of State, your visit has provided a valuable opportunity to hold useful discussions, which will undoubtedly contribute towards further development of friendship and understanding between our two countries. We have appreciated your assurance that your great country will continue to extend valuable assistance to us in promoting the welfare of our people. I am confident that the bonds of friendship and co-operation between United States of America and Bangladesh will continue to grow to the mutual benefit of our two governments and peoples.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request you to join me in a toast to the health, long life and happiness of His Excellency Mr. Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States of America, to the health, long life and happiness of our honored guests, Dr. Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State of the United States of America, and Mrs. Kissinger, and to the well-being and prosperity of the people of the United States of America. END QUOTE

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2. Transcript of Secretary's response follows:

QUOTE Mr. Foreign Minister, Mrs. Hossain, Distinguished Guests: When I saw all these microphones brought and placed in front of us, I said to my friend the Foreign Minister that one of us had better say something intelligent and I am glad to know that he has already relieved me of any burdens that I may have with his eloquent toast. It is of course difficult to respond to someone who speaks English better than I do.

I would like to express my great pleasure at being the first Secretary of State to visit Bangladesh and it is a particular privilege for me because your Foreign Minister whom I knew at Harvard gave me an opportunity to renew my acquaintance with him first in New York and then here, and several other former colleagues from Harvard have also been invited to this occasion. But above all I am moved to be here because it is not often that one can visit a country whose courage and suffering earned its independence in a so recent past and which symbolizes so much the necessities of our period.

Bangladesh has gone, in ten years, from dependence to independence and now to interdependence. In the last century when new nations came into being they thought they could then live a self-contained existence and given the economies

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of that period that was a reasonable aspiration. Put Bangladesh came into being, as your Foreign Minister has pointed out, after centuries of suffering, at the precise moment when no nation could by its own methods achieve the aspirations of its people. All nations, however rich, however long established, have had to learn to live with the reality that all of us can achieve our objectives only by a common effort or not at all.

And so this country has found itself in a situation of increasing population, in a world of rising prices, and having to establish a basis for development and prosperity. The American people have always shared the aspirations for the independence and progress of Bangladesh and we have been able to contribute, to some small extent, to the realization of Bangladesh's hopes. We believe very strongly that a world in which children go hungry is an intolerable world and all of us, and all nations, face the problem of what to do about the challenge of food. Of course, surplus countries can help but the ultimate solution must be in increasing the productivity of the deficit countries and we agree with the Foreign Minister that in this respect the potential of Bangladesh has only begun to be tapped. The United States continues to be ready to cooperate with the deficit countries and especially with

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established friends like Bangladesh in achieving this aspiration.

In our talks this afternoon we had an opportunity to discuss the whole range of development efforts of Bangladesh and to see in what way the efforts of other countries could be mobilized to help realize the aspirations of the people of this beautiful country. We agree that it is better to make a major effort than to stagger on from crisis to crisis overcoming only the symptoms.

As for the international goals stated by the Foreign Minister, they are compatible with the aspirations of my country for a world of diversity based on respect for national dignity and operating on the principles of equality and mutual accommodation. We hope that whatever disagreements remain on the subcontinent can be resolved in that same spirit. And we have applauded the generosity of spirit which Bangladesh has contributed to the negotiations that have been taking place in this area. The United States, whenever it can, will use its influence for a just and equitable peace, including, of course, in the critical areas of the Middle East, and we know that those countries that cannot always participate directly in the negotiations will sustain us.

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with their good wishes.

So I want to say that my visit here has been too short. I have been touched by the warmth of Bengalee hospitality. I have been delighted to renew my acquaintance with so many old friends and to have met so many new ones. I was particularly pleased to have my talks with the Prime Minister, who had made a profound impression already when we met in New York and who had a very good and, I believe, very fruitful talk with President Ford. So in bringing you the good wishes of our President I would like to propose a toast to the President of Bangladesh, to the Prime Minister, to the Foreign Minister and to the enduring friendship of our two peoples. END QUOTE

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